

BRUSHING YOUR TEETH

Arizona Department of Corrections
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program
HEP 1015-01/06

Your teeth are meant to last a lifetime! Tooth decay and gum disease can be avoided or reduced by daily removal of plaque, eating balanced meals and limiting foods high in sugar.

PLAQUE (PLAK) is a sticky yellow/white substance, is made up of food debris, saliva and germs that live in your mouth. This is what makes your teeth look dirty and your breath smell bad. It is important to remove this plaque daily to prevent germs from forming acids which can cause cavities or other products that can harm your teeth, gums and jaw bone. You can remove this nasty plaque by properly cleaning your teeth and gums at least twice a day.



DAILY CLEANING OF TEETH AND GUMS:

Soft toothbrush only!

- Use a soft tooth brush that can be purchased in the inmate store. If your brush becomes worn out or frayed it may mean that you are brushing too hard or it's time for a new brush.

Use toothpaste with Fluoride!

Use gentle small motions when brushing!

- Don't clean your teeth the way you scrub a bathtub. Scrubbing can hurt your teeth and gums, making them very sensitive.

Don't rush when you brush!

- Spend an ample amount of time cleaning your teeth. Just 2 minutes will probably NOT remove all the plaque.

Clean what your brush does not reach!

- At least once a day use a floss pick device (if available on your yard depending on the security level) to gently clean between your teeth and slightly under your gums.

- Hold the floss tight against the side of the tooth and scrape the floss down and up the side of the tooth.
- You need to floss both sides of every tooth. Do **NOT** forget to floss behind back teeth or where there are no adjacent teeth. **Flossing can help keep your gums healthy and prevent cavities between your teeth!**
- After flossing, gently massage your gums with your finger. Then rinse with warm salt water. This will improve red or puffy gums.

HOW TO CLEAN AWAY PLAQUE

- To brush away the plaque start by brushing the sides of your teeth that touches the cheek. Place your tooth brush at an angle so the bristles touch the teeth and the gums at the same time. Use small gentle circles to massage your teeth clean.
- After brushing the cheek side of your mouth, top and bottom teeth, brush the side that faces the tongue on the top and bottom teeth in the same way.
- To clean the inside of your front teeth, top and bottom, place the toothbrush in your mouth straight in. Using the tip of your brush use a sweeping motion in one direction to sweep out.
- Brush the flat, chewing surface of your top and bottom teeth. These surfaces have grooves and pits where food and germs hide. Brush in circular motion again a few teeth at a time.
- Last but not least! Gently brush your tongue to rid it of germs and make your mouth feel fresher.



Toothbrushes and toothpaste can be purchased at the inmate store. Other dental hygiene aids are available. Information on brushing your teeth is now available on your TV on the ADC channel.